/78/

Statistics

161 The tribe is in complete decadence and in a few more
162 years will be entirely lost. At the beginning of the nine-
[181] teenth century, that is, before the war of South American Independence, in the Tarija missions alone there were more than 23,000 souls, and nevertheless that number did not include any of the numerous towns existing between the two large Parapiti and Pilcomayo rivers or the Indians of Caipipendi, Choreti, Pipi, and others located south of Lagunillas. At that time, I can state that the Chiriguano numbered more than 200,000, inasmuch as, according to the statistics of Father Lozano, the adult men fit for war, without counting women and children, numbered from 25,000 to 35,000.

167 Although Father Lozano was referring to the beginning of the eighteenth century, the difference must have been slight, because at the beginning of the nineteenth century there was not felt as there is today the emigration to the Argentine Republic, which began when the territory was opened to trade with the founding of towns of white Christians, which there are now in great number, up to the founding of large provinces with the names of Acero, Cordillera, and Gran Chaco, nor was there so much immorality as prevails today (1).

1. New laws have been made which make recruitment for Argentina impossible, and Dr. don Justo Padilla, the present national delegate from the Gran Chaco, at the present time does not allow the law to be merely written; he lets nobody through.

165 Epidemics, vagrancy, and emigration more than any-
161 thing, in addition to scarcity of provisions, are destroying this race, which is greatly needed and will be needed later for agriculture and cattle-raising in the provinces which have
000 been mentioned. Today there is already a need for farmers.

/112 cont./

142 The Chiriguano at the time of birth has a color which is difficult to define, but, and let nobody laugh at this, his color is that of newborn mice, and as he grows the color changes until it is that of sunburnt parchment. The causes [147] of this change are the tropical heat, the sudden winds and changes, and the burning sun, to the action of which they expose themselves with untoward pleasure, with no bother and without fear, even should they be but tender infants.

144 147 From this it can easily be deduced that the Indian does not fear the canicular sun, or heat either; he works on the [291] [516] hottest days without shirt, trousers, or anything which resembles these; he stretches out full length, very content, receiving on his back the rays of the firey sun, and nothing daunts him. But when the north wind changes to the south and consequently the cold begins and the frost comes, he is very cowardly, and it is hard to make him work well and happily; in such cases it is easier to suspend the work for a few days, not to pay the laborers anything at all, and not to get uselessly angry; but this can only be done when the suspension does not have any bad effects (2). /Illustration appears here./

2. It is not only the Chiriguano Indian who hates the cold, but also the other races of America, such as, for example, the Quichua /Quechua/, according to what the historian Robertson says.

• 165 /113/ Life Span

The Chiriguano normally lives a good many years; he is little affected by heat, cold, and the inconstancy of the climate, nor by drunkenness and self-indulgence, to which [145] capital vices he abandons himself from a tender age. Some reach and pass 100 years, judging their longevity by their hair, since their hair does not turn white except at a very

[Text Continues on P. 156]

/113 cont./

165 [145] advanced age. and I have seen Indians with the head completely white. and others with a white the color of smoke or something smoked. In the performance of my ministry I have met and baptized many centenarians at the time of their death. and in the towns through which I have passed I have met several who fought in the Caraparí war and who witnessed the War of Independence.

293 27 [178] But today the Chiriguano has degenerated greatly: in somewhat distant times they did not know about either liquor or coca. and today both are general. and because of liquor and coca. the use of which they much abuse. they ruin their health and shorten their existence. Much youth disappears with the abuse of these substances. and as a general rule in the missions the best disappear. those who know some art or have some fortune: all that they earn. after buying their clothing (although not always). they invest in liquor and coca. and [165 248] thus shorten their lives. I have seen towns where out of 40 or 50 young men of the same age there are scarcely two or three alive who will reach 50: it can thus be seen that the drunkenness produced by chicha is not so pernicious as that of liquor or alcohol. for which any tax imposed on them by the Supreme Government is never too much. and would that such a tax were higher. more general. and that it was not felt to be enough simply to write it out. In spite of this dissipated life, it is [142 149] very rare that one encounters a bald Indian. which indicates great robustness (1).

1. I have known many large and small Chiriguano towns: I have only found three semibald persons.

Morality

151 At present the Chiriguano Indian differs slightly or not at all morally from the common mass of men. I mean that not all are good nor are all perverse: there are good ones and bad ones

/211 cont./

853 262 There is no special food or more abundant food for mothers after childbirth. She who gives her breasts to her little one eats little and extremely poorly. Her ordinary food is parched maize, parched maize meal, bread made of the same, herbs, beans, gourds, other things of this nature, and rarely a little purchased beef, other meat from animals that died from sickness, lack of pasture, or snake bite, and, finally, game or chicken. In spite of this extremely bad food, milk is abundant in her breasts; the children are almost always hanging from them and sucking and never seem to dry them up, which indicates that they are excellent nursers.

648 464 853 Mestizo or white mothers who sometimes have little or no breast milk because of sickness or some accident make contracts with Chiriguano mothers, pay them well, and treat them better, but it seems that continued good and satisfactory nursing harms them, /212/ it also being prejudicial to the breast as well as to both newborn babies, the weaker child succumbing first (1).

1. Naturally the Chiriguano women refuse to be wet nurses for white children, because they abhor them. When through experience they learn of the sad consequences, communicated by others, they resist even more and only do it when force or the right of the stronger prevails.

Twins

845 [163] [165] Multiple births are rare, and those of two children are frequent. In the former case the newborn babies die very soon, and in the latter case one almost always lives, and many times both live. When twins survive or through the death of the mother a newborn child is left an orphan, it is very easy for the grandmother to care for one twin or the orphaned child. Although the old woman may have reached or passed 60, she

736 603 [853] [824]

/159 cont./
In the village of Cuevo alone 60 out of 200 persons died within a short time. I visited the 140. They were as gay as ever. Spirits and beer were consumed in quantities.

Father Bernardino was never given credit for this work, but rather the medicine men, who had bewitched the sickness so that it would not come to Ivu. The white colonists, too, occasionally had the medicine men come in order to /Fig. 78 appears here/ drive away the sickness. They did not believe in the vaccine either.

With Ivu as the starting point, I made a trip into the

Fig. 77. Clay vessel made by the wife of the Chiriguano chief Maringay. 1/6.

Igüembe valley, in order to visit the Chiriguano chief Maringay. It was a charming ride on horseback up on the high crests and down into deep valleys, through an often grandiose, colorful landscape. These valleys are poor in forests. Only in a well-protected ravine in which a brook trickles forth is the vegetation luxuriant.

I soon became very good friends with old Maringay. The old man was conservative, clung to the old customs, and felt that the Indians should be on good terms with the whites, but should preserve their old habits and customs unchanged. His village was extraordinarily interesting and very rich in old, fine things.

/214 cont./

581 This Jesuit priest describes the marriages of the Chiriguano, however, as very loose.

581 273 With marriage, life begins in earnest for these Indians. It consists of work and drinking maize beer. I have already described their work somewhat; I shall discuss their drinking bouts below.

165 The life of the Indian men and women passes more quickly

142 291 516

Fig. 112. Old woman. Río Itiyuro.
Her grandsons were about 18 years old and younger.

165 than that of whites. The age of the Indian is very difficult to determine when one has no definite figures to go by. Maringay told me that he was the oldest of his tribe, that none of his contemporaries was living any more. The whites said that Maringay was over 100 years old. This is exaggerated, however. As a newly married /215/ youth 16-20 years old, Maringay visited

/215 cont./
President Belzu in Sucre. The latter governed between 1848-1855; thus, 100-year-old Maringay is obviously not more than about 80. An 80-year-old Indian is therefore the oldest of his tribe. Among the Indians one almost always sees /Fig. 112 appears here/ that the one who has grown-up grandchildren is very frail and senile and stands at the brink of the grave. Indian men and women mature very rapidly, but also age quickly. At 50 the Indian is an old man, at 70 a so-called centenarian. Im Thurn (1) likewise

1. Im Thurn, op. cit., p. 190.

believes that the Indians do not grow old. /216/ He thinks that they seldom reach an age older than 40 or 50.

Maringay's hair was slightly gray. There are some Indian men and women whose hair is almost whitish yellow, but they are rare (Fig. 112). I never saw a bald Indian. When they are older, their faces are deeply furrowed. Not infrequently they become blind in old age, less often deaf.

Among the Choroti and Ashluslay the appearance of old people is often frightening; they are dirty, emaciated, and bleary-eyed. This is not the case among the Chané and Chiriguano. These Indians know how to grow old in beauty, and even the old people keep themselves nice and clean.

If the Chané or Chiriguano Indian becomes seriously ill, the medicine man is sent for, as among other Indians.

The Chiriguano and Chané distinguish between two kinds of medicine men, whom they call "ipáye" or "ipáyepótchi." The former are good and lift the spell; the latter are able to lift the spell and to bewitch.

I once jokingly asked a Chiriguano whether Father Bernardino in Ivu was an "ipáye" or an "ipáyepótchi." The Indian answered dutifully, an "ipáye." The position of the missionary among the Indians is that of medicine man; he assumes their power and their influence.

In the preceding I said that the whites in the vicinity of Ivu sent for an Indian medicine man to drive away smallpox.